Rule Statement

Texas A&M University-Commerce awards salary increases, including merit raises and merit payments, to faculty who demonstrate outstanding job performance in accordance with System Regulation 31.01.08 Merit Salary Increases.

Reason for Rule

This rule is required by System Regulation 31.01.08. Merit Salary Increases. It provides the procedure to be used when granting a merit raise or a merit payment to faculty members.

Procedures and Responsibilities

1 ELIGIBILITY FOR THE FACULTY MERIT SALARY PROGRAM

1.1 A&M-Commerce authorizes a merit plan for its faculty members. The details of the plan will be reviewed annually by the President’s Advisory Council and approved by the President.

1.2 All full-time faculty members employed at A&M-Commerce are eligible for the merit salary program.

2 MERIT SALARY INCREASE DEFINITIONS

2.1 Base salary: The base salary is the annual salary that is provided to the faculty member for support of teaching, research and service missions of the institution.

2.2 Merit raises: Faculty merit raises may be granted based on established meritorious criteria, defined as sustained superior performance over a period of one year, supported by performance evaluations and other similar supervisory documentation or evidence of outstanding achievement. A merit raise increases the faculty member’s base salary.

2.2.1 Merit salary raises are compensation as defined under Texas Government Code §822.201 and are eligible for all general deferral plans offered by the System.
2.3 Merit payments: Faculty merit payments may be granted based on established meritorious criteria, defined as sustained superior performance over a period of one year, supported by performance evaluations and other similar supervisory documentation or evidence of outstanding achievement. A merit payment will not increase the faculty member's base salary.

2.3.1 Merit payments are not considered compensation as defined under Texas Government Code §822.201 and are only eligible for the optional portion of the IRC §403(b) deferred annuity plan and the IRC §457 deferred compensation plan. They are not eligible for mandatory contributions under either the IRC §401(a)/TRS or the IRC §403(b)/ORP program.

3 AWARD OF MERIT INCREASES

As a general rule, merit increases, including raises and payments, are granted at the beginning of the fiscal year and in accordance with budget guidelines approved by the Board of Regents. In cases of exceptional job performance, merit salary increases may be granted at times other than the beginning of the fiscal year. A merit payment may only be awarded once annually. At least six months must have elapsed between each merit salary increase.

3.1 The merit increases shall be funded within the existing budget of A&M–Commerce. Expenditures for this program shall be made from allowable funds.

3.2 All merit increases must be recommended through proper channels and approved by the President.

3.3 Merit increases for faculty members shall be treated as payroll items subject to standard withholdings and deductions.

3.4 Merit increases cannot be granted during a faculty member’s first six months of employment.

4 MERIT RAISE/MERIT PAYMENT CRITERIA

4.1 A faculty member who demonstrates sustained superior performance, evidenced by an above average or excellent overall rating on a current performance evaluation, or who has successfully completed a special project of significance to warrant special recognition, may be recommended for a merit salary increase which could be in the form of a merit raise or a merit payment.

4.2 A faculty member who demonstrates efficient use of state resources that result in significant savings to the department, A&M-Commerce or the System may be recommended for a merit salary increase, which could be in the form of a merit raise or merit payment.

4.3 A faculty member who earns a doctoral degree from an accredited institution of higher education or receives a certificate, license, award, or other proof of accomplishment related to his/her job may be recommended for a merit increase, which could be in the form of a merit raise or a merit payment.
5 OUT-OF-CYCLE MERIT RAISES

Clearly exceptional performance or accomplishment may occur for which an out-of-cycle merit raise may be appropriate. Very strong evidence should be presented to justify this increase should be granted outside of the regular budget cycle. Merit raises may be awarded in accordance with the following general guidelines:

5.1 Merit raises should be based on the criteria in Section 4 above.

5.2 The faculty member’s performance must be documented on a Faculty Performance Evaluation Form completed within the past six months.

6 MERIT PAYMENTS

6.1 Merit payments are in recognition of superior performance or increased responsibilities. The amount of merit payment that may be awarded to a faculty member as part of the Faculty Merit Payment Program for each fiscal year will be determined by a plan approved by the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs in conjunction with the Academic Director or Dept. Head/Dean/Associate Vice President.

6.2 Merit payments may not exceed 10% of base salary without prior authorization of the President.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

Texas Education Code § 51.962 Merit Salary Increases

System Regulation 31.01.01 Compensation Administration

System Regulation 31.01.08 Merit Salary Increases

Contact Office

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